



“Even if something is left undone, everyone must take time to sit still and watch the leaves turn.”

Elizabeth Lawrence

Mindful Merriment:

Self-Care Strategies for a Joyful Holiday Season

As we enter the holidays, it's worthwhile to take pause and consider ways to mindfully move through this season. While many of our responsibilities, commitments, and mental checklists typically grow exponentially longer this time of year, there's power and peace in taking a step back to see what works for us this year - and what doesn't.

Sometimes we need to make adjustments to traditions, how we bend ourselves to meet the expectations of others, and even the expectations we put on ourselves. This holiday season, let's gently pushback on the urge to "power through" without regard for our mind, body, and heart.

With this shift in our movements in mind, here are some practical skills to explore to help you make even the smallest of changes for your health.





Cultivate Meaningful Connections

Deepen Relationships

- Engage in meaningful conversations and activities with loved ones.
- Practice active listening and presence when spending time with others.

Practical Tip:

- Set aside technology during meals or gatherings to foster genuine interaction.
- Plan a simple, shared activity like baking, playing a game, or taking a walk to create memorable and intentional moments together.

Affirmations:

- I create meaningful connections by being fully present, listening with intention, and cherishing shared moments with my loved ones.
- I nurture my relationships through thoughtful actions and genuine attention, fostering deeper bonds and lasting memories.



Move Your Body with Intention

Stay Active, Stay Present

- Physical activity can help regulate emotions and reduce stress.
- Try yoga, stretching, or even a short walk to refresh your energy.

Practical Tip:

- Pair movement with gratitude by reflecting on something you're thankful for during your activity.
- If you're at a family event and need to reduce stress, take a walk out to your car to grab something and take a few moments to stretch your body or practice deep breathing.

Affirmation:

- I honor my body and mind by moving with intention, using each step and stretch to refresh my energy and cultivate gratitude.



Simplify Traditions

Focus on Meaning, Not Perfection

- Let go of the pressure to do everything. Simplify gift-giving, meal prep, or decorating by focusing on what brings joy rather than stress.

Practical Tip:

- Choose one or two meaningful traditions instead of trying to do it all.
- Delegate tasks to family or friends, turning activities like decorating or meal prep into shared, joyful experiences.

Affirmations:

- I release the need for perfection and embrace simplicity, focusing on traditions that bring joy and meaning to my holiday season.
- By sharing responsibilities and cherishing the moments that truly matter, I create a holiday filled with connection and ease.



Mindful Merriment

Savor with Awareness

- Approach holiday meals and beverages with mindfulness by fully experiencing their flavors, textures, and aromas. Eat and drink slowly, allowing yourself to truly enjoy each bite and sip.

Practical Tips:

- Take a few deep breaths to ground yourself and express gratitude for the experience.
- Stay hydrated and mindful of your alcohol intake.

Affirmations:

- I savor each bite and sip with mindfulness and gratitude, fully embracing the joy of the moment.
- I honor my body and well-being by eating and drinking with intention, staying present and balanced throughout the celebrations.



May the holidays bring you moments of connection, rest, and joy.

Sometimes it can feel uncomfortable to make even the smallest of changes in how we engage the holidays with family and friends. Allow room for that discomfort while also embracing the motivation to create a holiday season that honors your needs. Creating space for new patterns of self-care can cause disruption with others - but that can also be an invitation to others to take better care of themselves too. Regardless of how others respond to your self-care priorities, you deserve to take good care of you.

Wishing you a holiday season that is best for you and your health this year. Making shifts and changes to how we do holidays takes time and intention. Be gentle with yourself and allow plenty of room for self compassion.

Affirmations:

- I honor my needs and embrace the courage to create new traditions, even if it feels uncomfortable, knowing that my self-care inspires and uplifts those around me.
- I deserve to prioritize my well-being, and I trust that making space for my needs benefits not only myself but also the connections I hold dear.

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